Jersey Beat confidential

Vol.I, No.2

extra

AUGUST, 1988

They Wanna Be Your Dog

by Tom Angelli

Dog Tired are probably the best new band from the bowels of NJ. They've got a great sound all their own, and plan to start recording their first demo this summer.
Dog Tired are: Guy - guitar & vocals
Mark - guitar & vocals
Al - bass
Jim - drums

Q: How long has Dog Tired been around? Were you in any bands before that?

Guy: Dog Tired has been around about a year. My old band was Bad Dogma.
Mark: About a year. Al and I were in a "punk cover" band, Stretcher Case. We played a couple of shows a few years ago, after about 2 or 3 weeks of practice. It was fun at the time, but it never turned into anything. Now we just have Dog Tired and I'm real happy with it.
Jim: Just fuck around bands to get used to some kind of style.

Q: What people/bands influenced you to be in a band of your own?

G: Influences & inspiration - Tomas of Beefeater, Guy from Rites Of Spring...their bands. I'm really into Fugazi, they're fucking great. Other influences - Soul Asylum, I love them, the Descendents.

Continued on next page

PAGAN BABIES
Next, LP
Hawker/Roadrunner

I'm not exactly neutral on the topic of this band, since the drummer used to do art for this fanzine before he went off and became a big ROCK star and got too busy to help out his old friends. But that's okay, because I enjoy listening to his band almost as much as I used to love getting his artwork in the mail. "Next" is a major leap from the Pagan Babies' 7" debut, with a deeper, richer sound and the same imaginative songwriting that characterized their EP. Mike McManus writes lyrics that don't hew to the usual hardcore topics - for one thing, this band does love songs, whereas a band like Youth Of Today hardly acknowledges that women exist in their lyrics. For another, the double guitars get used very sparingly - most of the time they're playing the same chords, making a very deep roar - so when they do explode into a lead riff, it's a real buzz. And the band uses influences well beyond the range of just hardcore, from rap (on "Fuck You I'm Punk") to classic punk to Australian garage-rock (they cover the Lime Spiders' " Beyond The Fringe.") My only suggestions for the future might be to work on developing some backup harmonies for Mike's vocals (which are mixed very high and sort of reedy here, and could use a little embellishment now & then) and expand the use of lead/rhythm guitar parts. And make sure Bruce brings along his pens and inks on tour, so he can do some cartoons for me sometime, ok?

- Jim T.

HAPPY FLOWERS
I Crush Bozo, LP
Homestead

Yet another record packed with more uncompromising hate noise from the always wonderful Happy Flowers. Just a bit different this time around. Some "tunes" actually sound structured as opposed to the chaotic blasts of noise they've been producing since Day 1. Funnier too. I almost pissed my pants after listening to "Old Relatives." For some reason you just don't seem to get tired of their silliness.

Ok, this LP has 16 tracks. Titles include "Get Me Off The Broiler Pan" and "My Frisbee Went Under A Lawnmower." All songs are about exactly what you'd expect: a child's mind crying out. LP comes with a list of ways to disturb your parents, like going into another room with a power tool, switching it on, throwing fake blood through the door, and SCREAMING! Nice cover art. Limited edition on colored vinyl. Worth the price.

- John Lisa

Continued from previous page

M: I like mostly melodic but quick punk/hardcore bands. The ones that really helped motivate me to write and play are stuff like Stiff Little Fingers, the Clash, Rites of Spring, Beefeater, Descendents, Cockney Rejects. I also like a lot of "non-punk" stuff that really inspired me, like Bob Marley, Joy Division, and ska.
A: When I hear about how bad Paul Simenon was on bass, it's very inspiring. I mean, look how far the Clash got. He used to tape the damn notes on his fretboard.
J: This guy Mr. Goodwine that I work with always tells me to keep it up and never quit. As for groups, mostly Descendents, Dag Nasty, Bob Marley a lot lately, and Rites of Spring.

Q: Most of you have regular jobs, how does that affect your progress as a band?
G: My job really doesn't affect the band, I won't let it.
M: I just quit mine so it gives me time to work on new songs. But I'm going to get a job pretty soon or I'll be broke.
A: Dog Tired is my job. No, I don't have a job at the moment...because I'm a real punk.
J: It can really kill sometimes because my work is tiring. But the band is such a rush at times that I keep up okay.

Dog Tired

Q: How would you describe your music?
G: That's tough, I hope it comes off sounding emotional and sincere - because the lyrics mean a lot to me. God, man! They come from fear, frustration, and people that have moved me from time to time.
M: We're not a typical hardcore band. I think we've formed a sound of our own and have some variety in our songs. We've avoided the typical song formulas that many bands stick to.
A: We've been compared to bands like Soulside and Kingface. I don't consider us really a hardcore band, just a band.
J: Passionately frustrated without remorse for overindulgence of emotion.

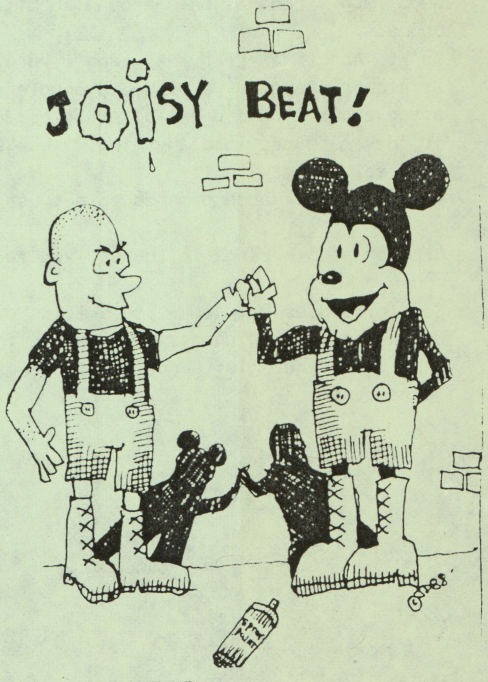
Q: How hard is it for a new band to play? You've only played the Rat Trap Cafe so far.
G: It's really hard to find places to play. For one thing, we really don't know anyone who can help us get shows with bigger bands. It really makes me mad, there are so many people we want to reach, so many places we want to play.
M: We won't be playing at the Rat Trap anymore. I don't think $6 is reasonable for an all-ages show with only 2 relatively unknown local bands. Their bar shows are like $2 or $3. That's ridiculous! There seems to be a decent amount of places to play. We've yet to play any so I couldn't tell you how hard it is to get shows. We're in the process of calling clubs and talking to friends in other bands about getting gigs.
J: It's hard as dick because nobody wants to bill somebody who hasn't been anywhere yet. Catch us for sure.

Q: If you could open for any band, who would it be?
G: Anybody.
M: I'd like to play with Soulside or the False Prophets.
A: Ed Gein's Car, False Prophets...
J: As of lately, the bands I'd most like to play with are Verbal Assault, Soul Asylum, yes! still Dag Nasty, and now Fugazi.

Q: What are the band's immediate plans?
G: I think the most important thing right now is play. We are doing a demo and we're going to start our own label, Ear Casualty Records.
M: The demos and shows. I wouldn't mind playing out of state. Who knows?

Q: Any closing comments?
G: We'd love to play for free. Bands interested in being on our label, mail us something. Peace and love for everybody.
M: I hope people will give us a listen and enjoy what we're playing. I hope we don't get categorized as a certain type of band. I'm just looking forward to playing for people and meeting them. See ya then!
J: Come see us live as much as possible so you can make friends with us, and don't disrespect your friends 'cause for new they're all you got.

Write to Dog Tired c/o Guy, 24 McKinley Ave., E. Hanover NJ 07936.



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Staff: Bruce Gallanter, Maria Jenis, John Lisa, Casey Sommers (cartoons), Pted (weird artwork), Joey Nardone (punk rock doodles), Tom Angelli (surf punk), Tami Morgan (teen punk), and Mark Fogarty (not a punk).

MAYFIRST

First, there is Amy Jacobs' voice. Mayfirst begins with that voice - a strident, emotional reedy instrument that makes you think of Siouxsie or, a generation later, Kristin Hersh of Throwing Muses. Then there is the music - an electronic thunderstorm of distorted & overamplified guitar and bass propelled by quick, crisp drums in "Unrelenting Hate," a throbbing bass under feedback guitar-noise in "26 Stitches," followed by a powerfully melodic vocal and a hypnotizing riff of descending chords... This is one of the most original demos I've heard in a while; not industrial, not pop, but with elements of both, art-rock without pretension or affectation. You can never guess where the next song will go from listening to the one before, but I'm eager to hear where this band will go from here.

(% Drew Gardner, Box 527 Patterson Avenue, Titusville, NJ 08560.)

MAYFIRST

New Bands

PSYCHOS IN LOVE

PSYCHOS IN LOVE

Is it just coincidence that this Rutgers-bound trio bears an amazing resemblance to New Brunswick's resident scenemeisters, Spiral Jetty? There's the same sparse, strummed guitar, the same bouncing bass, the same skewed-pop sensibility. And even the Jetty's lyrical bent - what I like to think of as David Lynch Rococo, bucolic shaded lots with severed human ears lying in the grass - comes into play, with songs about rejected love and unleashed passions that take a left turn at logic. "Taxi Driver," with its mod/ska beat and uptempo rockin' chorus, reminds me of early Mod Fun. The vocals, shared by guitarist Scott and bassist Nigel, are fresh and engaging, and drummer Jed keeps a solid and steady beat with a light hand, in keeping with the band's airy and minimalist style.

(39 Bayshore Dr. Toms River NJ 08573)

New Music Seminar Report

DIARY OF A ROCK CRITTER

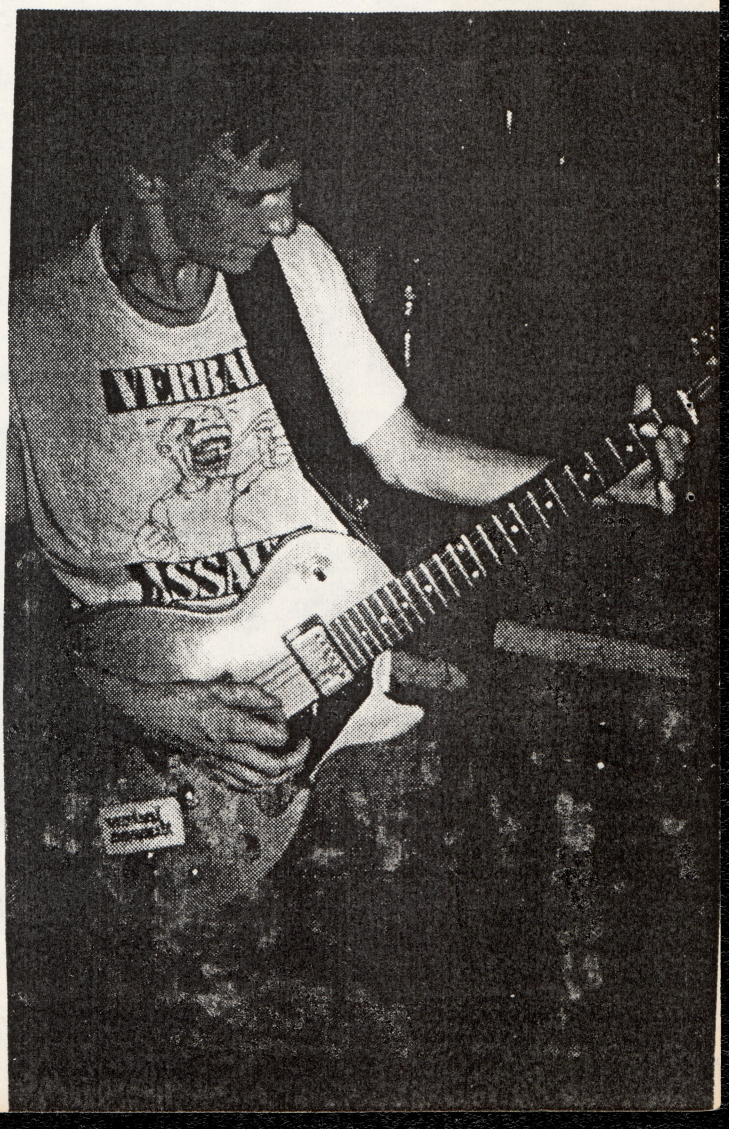
Jersey Beat Confidential

SATURDAY, JULY 15 - Bailter Space/Bats/The Last, Maxwells - The 2 New Zealand bands on the top of the bill were as gamey and third-rate as New Zealand lamb, playing warmed-over Amerindie rock/pop without an original idea between them. Bailter Space - generic Gerardmetal distorto/grunge sludgecore, the Bats sticky-sweet college-radio pop/slop. The Last, reborn after a few years hiatus, were plagued by the usual Maxwells Mix From Hell, so the Beatlesque harmonies of their new LP were lost in the aether. But they rocked nonetheless through a tough, tight set of new songs, and then played two from 1979's L.A. Explosion lp that had me & Jack Rabid turning cartwheels. Really. You shoulda been there.

SUNDAY, JULY 16 - Combat Records Showcase, CBGB - Somehow I managed to force myself to miss Death and DBC. Stayed home and watched the Yankees on tv.

MONDAY, JULY 17 - Giant Records Showcase, Lismar Lounge - Tiny overheated basement run by Rastas who kept hawking their shoddily silkscreened Seminar t-shirts and smoking reefer when they should have been trying to get the Mickey Mouse p.a. to work a little better. Verbal Assault, with Darren Mock and Doug Ernst on bass & drums this time out, were their usual amazing selves, the crowd surprising sedate (no slamming, in fact the front row sat thru the set). This inspired the band to play a few more slower, moodier pieces, Chris Jones' emotional vocals ripping holes in our hearts and Pete Chrmiec's blazing guitar expanding the band's growing collection of killer lead fills and riffs. Dag Nasty - responsible for one of the NMS's best rumors, that Giant pressed 25,000 copies of Field Day and got 20,000 of them back from their distributors - sucked, plagued by shoddy p.a., backup harmony vocals totally inaudible, guitars distorted, etc etc etc but then any hardcore band that thinks they're gonna sell out and make Top 40 like R.E.M. is too stupid to live anyway. I hear Government Issue were okay but I had to go to work the next day. Met Jim the Drummer from Dog Tired and waved hello to Gerry Cosloy, who didn't wave back, but that was all the networking available as Giant label head Steev was nowhere to be found.

TUESDAY, JULY 18 - RocK Hotel Hardcore Show, Irving Plaza - Scored a ticket from Nathan (TWP 'zine) so I opted for this show over the 11-band SST showcase at CBGB. This may have been the single biggest nonstop lunkathon in the history of NY/HC, several thousand soaking wet skinheads packed into venerable Irving Plaza's highschool gym dimensions, 95+ degree heat and 98% humidity, I surprised it didn't start raining in there. Typical promoter fuckups found the doors not even open at the 7:30 start time, Sick Of It All played to an empty room as early arrivals started drifting in at 8 p.m. or so. Rest In Pieces previewed some harder, muscular crunch-rock which they'll be recording for Hawker Records, but the crummy sound system (which plagued every band on the bill) and mechanical snafus made their 15-minute set a nightmare. Underdog were totally amazing, raw power and adrenalin, singer Richie overcoming the bad vibes, oppressive ambience, and shoddy equipment through sheer force of personality, god these kids can rock it. Drummer Dean later told me Underdog will be hooking up with Agent Orange for a cross-country tour this summer, ending up at Gilman Street in Berkeley. Warzone sounded like shit and looked pretty stupid, never more so then when lead singer Raybies tried to deck one of the Irving Plaza stagehands prior to their set. Warzone can't decide if they want to be part of the new-wave Positive Punk crew or stay part of the old guard New Yawk nazi skinhead oi scene, but one thing's for sure: With a lead singer pushing thirty, signed to Caroline Records, and playing a New Music Seminar showcase, they sounded pretty fucking stupid singing Oi anthems like "Remember The Struggle, Remember The Streets." Leeway are just another generic speedmetal band with the exception of their baby-faced lead singer, Eddie, whose B-Boy charisma totally dominates their sets. Then Agnostic Front. What can I say? This band owns New York. When they play, it's 1982 again. It's power, it's speed, it's dynamic good vibes. It's punk rock Woodstock. No matter if it's a tiny place like CBGB or a ballroom like The Ritz, AF transforms any venue into a joyful community bonded in celebration. I don't think I've ever felt anything like what they can do to a room full of punks, but I've seen them do it too many times to be a doubter. At that point, I had lost about 12 pounds and bed was calling, so I missed Murphys Law. No great loss.

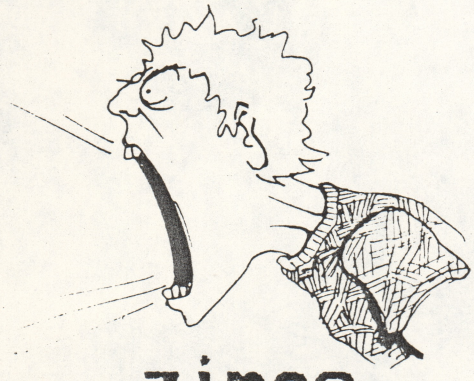


MUTATED VIRUSES With a Morbid Attraction To Trees, c/o Angi, 706 Valley Lane, Arlington Hts, IL 60004 #5 (2 stamps)
A half-size zine with poetry and graphics. Really well done for this sort of thing.

SUBURBAN YAWN #3
% Tad, 36 Claudet Way, Eastchester, NY 10709
Messy xeroxing but good interviews with Psycho, the Bags, and Scooter X, plus reviews and poetry. Not much to look at but not a bad read.

FISH DRUM MAGAZINE #1 $2.00
626 Kathryn Avenue, Santa Fe, NM 87501
Beautifully typeset and edited poetry and fiction 'zine. Subscriptions are $10 for 6 issues.

CHROME ON FIRE #2 $1.75
54 Ray Street, New Brunswick NJ 08901
David Aaron Clark returns with #2 of his Brunfuss-based zine, this one featuring the definitive Spiral Jetty interview, cool comix, reviews, and pieces by both Lee Renaldo and Sam Schiffman.



zines

PLAIN TRUTH #6 $1.00
PO Box 6774, Albany, NY 12206
School's out so Plain Truth moves back to Albany for the summer (editor Sam goes to college in NYC). This has been NY's best homegrown hardcore 'zine, if only for the healthy objectivity with which the staff views the whole posi-punk NY crew. Features here include Verbal Assault, Swiz, Dave Smalley, HR, and Kingface, plus record, show, and 'zine reviews you can put a little faith in. Plus it's put together very well.

SUBURBAN VOICE #25 $1.00
%Al Quint, PO Box 1605, Lynn MA 01903
Congrats to editor Al on his recent nuptials, otherwise you should know what to expect from SV by now: solid interviews, great photos, reliable reviews, and in this issue D.O.A., Killdozer, Soulside, and Goo Goo Dolls.

PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE #8 $1.00
4 Idlewood, Rapid City, SD 55701
Ok xeroxed hc zine, lots of diversity in the interviews (7 Seconds, Screeching Weasel, Heretics, etc), plus advice for draft-aged teens, reviews, punk-art graphics.

LIME GREEN BULLDOZERS #6 50 cents+stamp
% Lainie, 723 N. Highland Ave., Arlington Hts, IL 60004
More poetry and graphics. The editor of this zine and Mutated Viruses are getting an apartment together and merging their zines, so the next issue of both will be a double-combo type deal.

Confidential JERSEY BEAT

DIARY OF A ROCKCRITTER

FRICTION WHEEL/BALLOON SQUAD, Maxwells, June 23 - Balloon Squad tops my list of undiscovered local bands with a wealth of talent & potential; from Joe Merklee's lovably inept stage patter to his peripatetic bass excusions (only pop bassist I've ever seen who reminds me of Wuelfing) to his wonderfully warm & buoyant turns on lead vocals, to Citizen K's richly harmonic guitar (he needs a real name and a few less effects pedals, though), these guys can segue from Mersey to Chilton to Husker Du (gotta check out their "Songs About UFO's") and make you question the sanity of a world in which a band this richly talented can't get any kind of record deal. Friction Wheel show a ton of improvement over their last Maxwells appearance 6 months ago, what with guitarist Sean Condron now fully integrated in the group. There's still a touch of R.E.M. Syndrome at work here; but I love the sloppy punk-rock abandon with which lead singer/guitarist Willy Lopez throws himself into these songs, backup vocals and arrangements in general show real growth, and they know how to get all their friends to show up for their gigs (something that should endear them to local clubowners, and they've already got a supporter in Steve Fallon, which has never been known to hurt anybody's career). They'll be touring this summer, which should tighten up the ragged edges a bit, and then recording in the fall with Husker Bob Mould producing. Remember the name 'cos I'm sure I'll be rubbing in the fact that you read about them here first within the year.

CHICAGO SCENE REPORT

WIRE/BAND OF SUSANS, Cabaret Metro, June 24 - For starters, never trust Colin Newman to put you on the guest list in a strange city. So 30 dollars later, Ben Weasel and I are inside Cabaret Metro, Chicago's biggest club although it's half the size of the Ritz (Wire doesn't sell out here, either). Lots of scenesters here to check out the band (not surprising, given the big Wire influence in Chitown's art-core contingent). Band Of Susans open, 3 guys and 2 gals, and I'm not sure how many Susans are actually left. They are all too typical of the current New York Band penchant for droning power guitars, emotionless stage presence, angst dripping all over the place. I note both women in the band play "like girls" - simple strummed chords for the guitarist, the most rudimentary one-note bass parts - although the drummer can rock and a few of the songs have a weighty urgency, not unlike Live Skull. Wire makes more sense here than they did at Maxwells debuting this set in May; for one thing, they don't seem quite as under-rehearsed anymore, and Colin "Plus One" Newman shows quite a bit more animation fronting the band here than he did in Hoboken. I guess the "Bell Is A Cup" material makes sense if you think of it as Wire applying the same conceptual minimalism to contemporary British dance music (New Order, OMD, etc) that they applied to Punk back in the 70's. This stuff bores me to tears, though, although a few haircut teens in this all-ages crowd danced to it with unfeigned enthusiasm. Metro starts these all-ages shows at 7:30 pm, so I'm on the street at 11 and ready to go home just when a New York show would be starting. And David Letterman is on at 11:30 in Chicago. Not a bad place, overall.

I walked to a dark corner of the alley and sat down on the wet, dirty bricks and put my back to the wall. Trash was everywhere and it was raining. Tonight I had made 3 robberies and killed two men - including one cop. The other guy tried to rip me off.

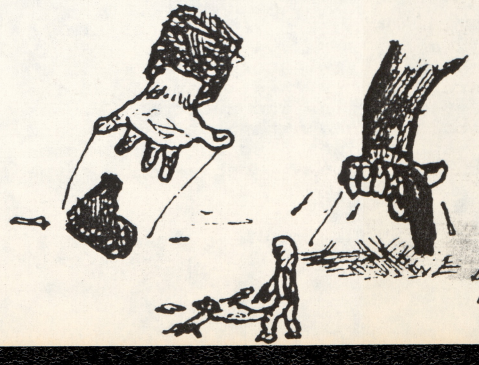
Then he stepped into the light on the opposite side of the alley. He was the partner of the cop I had killed.

"Drop your weapon or I'll shoot!" He repeated for the third time.

I looked at the ground, and let out the kind of groan you might give to your school principal. I set the gun down next to me.

"Now..." he said "Get up slowly."

He was walking towards me cautiously. I hated being ordered around. I quickly picked up my gun and shot him in the chest, gut, arm and leg. Then I spent the rest of the night bumming money and getting drunk. If that cop hadn't been so scared, I wouldn't have wasted him.



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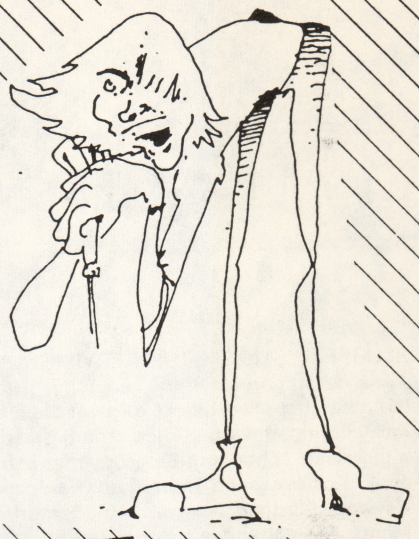


CHAOS

My mom said I should draw nice things. Like trees... and birds.

Yet, I seem to prefer Emaciation.

Watch out for Chaos, a new band from the West Caldwell area. All four members are excellent musicians (if I do say so myself, having sat in on one of their practice sessions), and they're all only 15, ninth-graders at James Caldwell High School (where, they claim, "the music scene sucks").. Despite their age, the dedication and talent they show is incredible. I guess you could call them a metal band, with influences ranging from Led Zeppelin to Metallica. The group consists of Justin Hower on vocals, Roy "Damage" Neustaeder on drums, Jon Baldwin on bass, and Paul Holda on guitar. Says Roy, "We've got our minds set to make it, but none of our parents realize we're serious." [Don't sweat it, Roy, I have the same problem - Ed.] Their parental support isn't much so they're counting on you. If you love thrash metal, throw a party and invite this band to play. They say they'd love to do it for free. You won't be disappointed. You can write Chaos c/o Paul Holda, 19 Kinley Avenue, W. Caldwell, NJ 07006.

- Tami Morgan

New Bands

SWINE DIVE

ALL-AGES SHOW

SLUGFEST/STISISM/TRIGGERVISION 8, June 11

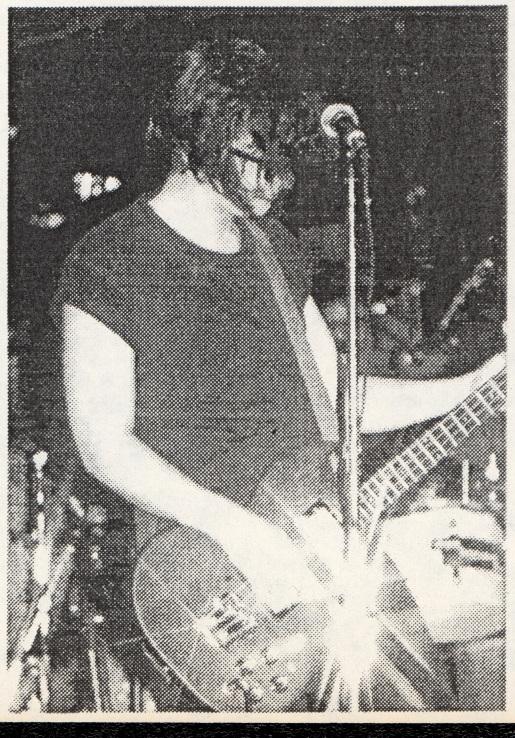
This wasn't one matinee, actually, it was two - one at CBGB, the other just a few blocks away at the Lismar, and with a little lucky timing and a quick job I managed to catch both. Although why either club is booking Saturday matinees is beyond me - there couldn't have been more than two dozen people at either show. Anyway, Slugfest is a young trio featuring Urban Rag editor Jon Ment. Their sound is a sloppy, happily rambunctious mixture of punk, country, and blues. They did a pretty funny version of "Should I Stay Or Should I Go" (the Clash's big sellout hit) and about a dozen originals, a few of which showed enough originality to insure I'm back for another look sometime soon. Stisism, who haven't been around much for a year or two, are planning a big comeback, although the way lead guitarist/vocalist Chris badmouths New York to his audiences, you have to wonder why. (Privately, to me on the phone, he said he wanted to get back into the scene because he was heartened by some of the recent shows he'd seen). Anyway, what with all the recent fuss about the 10th anniversay of Punk Rock and all that shit, it's nice to hear a band that sounds as if it's actually heard some of that stuff. Stisism still has a strong Ramones influence (the closed the Lismar set with two Ramones covers), power riffs and catchy melodies, and lyrics that hammer home simple ideas and basic wants. They've turned "Bacon Man" into some sort of anthem (kinda their "Blitzkrieg Bop") and they've got a song about going on a trip that's aces. They also have an LP in the can that they can't get any label to release for them. Welcome back, guys. Triggervision 88 (or TV88) features two fanzine dudes from Jersey, Brian Shapiro of Cancer and D.A. from Smash Apathy. Their music (if you want to call it that) transforms pain, anger, and pyschosis into concrete walls of bludgeoning sound. D.A. makes a fearsome frontman (I always thought he was a little nuts anyway), stoked on adrenalin and his friend Jack Daniels, ranting like a madman and distorting his histrionic vocals through a variety of distortion & echo fx. Meanwhile, guitar, bass, drums, and keyboards erect a mammoth roaring thunderstorm of angry electronic fury behind him. Powerful, moving, and - unlike a few too many suburban Sonic Youth wannabes - very clearly real.

SWINE DIVE/HENRY ROLLINS BAND, Maxwells, June 16

Lots of familiar faces at this show - Swine Dive features a few Maxwells employees, and every waiter, bartender, and busboy in the joint stuck their head in to watch for a bit - mingling with the odd collection of teenage skinheads, college-radio grunge fanatics, and old Black Flag fans who comprise Henry Rollins' faithful following. Swine Dive proved an impressive Die Kreuzen-ish ensemble, double guitar sonic whammy over bellowing post-hardcore vox, throbbing bass coupled with dynamic ringing drums. I'd suggest a few more slow songs (they did a pretty, psychedelic ballad early in the set that was a stunner) to help set up the fast, angry stuff, and maybe the rest of band (Larry Rubin and Jim Fu on guitars, Chris Ward on bass, and Kieth Nealy on drums) could give up the mannikin impressions and move a little, fer chrissake, and help support singer Steve Rebert, who does flail around and put a lot of moxie into his performance. The Rollins band followed and did a set of similar material, piledriver grunge rock, a little slower than thrash and a lot harder than any traditional notion of "rock." Swine Dive's double-guitars actually served up a richer and more varied sonic stew than the Rollins band, who cares? Rollins enjoys the services of what has to be considered one of New Jersey's greatest (and most long-lived) rhythm sections in Andrew and Sim; and let's face it, what Henry doesn't know about charisma doesn't matter. (Okay, Chris, can I get in for 1/2 price now?)

Chris/STISISM

TRIGGERVISION



Jon/SLUGFEST

New York Scene Report

CHRONIC CITIZENS
Capital Cult, LP
Pariah Productions, Box 1066, New York NY 10011

The heavy farfisa sound, jerky rhythms, and garage-pop mix remind me of early Blondie, but the songwriting is strictly from hunger. And it's hard to say nice things about a band when they can't come up with a single song you like. Maybe next time.

THE PLEASURE PIRATES
"Hidden Treasures" EP
RPM, 708 Broadway, New York, NY 10003

A 4-song intro to this band of veteran New Yawk musicians and quite okay at my house. When I hear the words "New York Rock" my thoughts turn to Johnny Thunders and that raunchy bar-band sound of the early, pre-punk 70's, which is exactly where these Pirates' heads are at. "Trapped" and "New York, New York" (theirs, not Frank & Liza's) stand out thanks to swaggering punkish guitar skronk and a welcomed lack of pretension. "Recorded live in NYC" it says on the sleeve, which probably means this is a CBGB board tape. Talented, and frugal too. Right on.

WARZONE
"Don't Forget The Struggle, Don't Forget The Streets" LP
Caroline

Reissue of first long-player, and a righteous slab of Oi! and NY/HC it is. I only wish Raybies & Co. would stop writing every lyric in terms of "Us Vs. Them" and using rabble-rousing lines like "fighting in the street." Skinheads aren't necessarily violent boneheads - in point of fact, this band has done a lot to improve the NY scene over the years - but it'd be better if they could learn to relate to all their potential fans, and not just the streetkids, skins, and straightedge punks who pack their shows.

YOUTH OF TODAY
We're Not In This Alone, LP
Caroline

An awful record by any standards, with its tinny sound, cliched "positive" lyrics, and derivative Minor Threat-wannabe riffs. And please,Ray, send that 14-year old drummer back to junior high school and hire a real rhythm section. You can afford one now.

CHEEPSKATES
Remember, LP
Music Mania (German import)

With all the shitty garage records flooding the Amerockan market, it's mind-boggling that this disc hasn't found an American label yet. Actually, the Cheepskates have long sinced transcended the 60's Revival tag. Shane Faubert's songwriting and pithy vocals, and the band's spare, hook-filled arrangements, make for the sort of glowing pop that hasn't been heard since the heyday of the dB's. Give 'em a bona fide lead guitarist (the one ingredient they lack) and they'd be another Big Star.

BBQ KILLERS
Comely, LP
Fundamental

Comely is anything but. With its slightly funkified metal riffs and fuzzbuzzing guitar, it's more Minneapolis than Athens, with a smattering of fat jungle drums added for flair. This is no-nonsense stuff, a cathartic joyride thru the Bar B Q Killers' strange and twisted universe. I could just praise them for the healthy sense of irony displayed by the title - they're grimey and grungey, noisy and ever-so-slightly tasteless. They sing about masturbation and liberally use the FCC's famed "seven words." And they've come up with my favorite new LP of the month.

- Maria J.

THE OUTNUMBERED
Work Buy Die LP
Edible, 621 E. Green, Champaign, IL 61820

More twangy garage-pop from this likeable combo. The new LP picks up where their 1985 Homestead release left off - hooky, light-spirited, and while it won't change your life, it will certainly brighten up an afternoon or two.

- J.T.

GIGOLO AUNTS
Everybody Happy LP
Coyote

If I were 19 and just starting a band, I'd be a little more careful about my influences and role models than these guys. The warmth and garagey high spirits I heard on their first NJ visit six months ago have been replaced by a smug slickness and a veneer of brittle British new-waviness, like they've stashed all their Bongos records in favor of the Jam and early Cure. And I don't think its just coincidental that the hottest band out of Boston (the Aunts' home base) these days is the Pixies, favorites of 4AD poseurs and skinny college students with stupid haircuts.

-J.T.

SALEM 66
Natural Disasters, National Treasures
Homestead

The subject matter is heavy, nearly leaden. Truth, insecurity, breakups, and various romance-related heartaches, even suicide, are depicted. You'd think this would make the record depressing and difficult, but it's buoyant, infectious, and yes, even sing-a-long-able! The slower tunes pull you in with sinuous guitar while the quicker tunes bubble along on light-as-air riffs. Absolute knockout track is "Lucky Penny," a shining, bouncing wonder of girl group-style pop complete with handclaps.

- Maria Jenis

JFA
Nowhere Blossoms, LP
Placebo, Box 23316, Phoenix, AZ 85063

Please forget they were once a hot skateboard/punk band. "Nowhere Blossoms" is more psychedelic than the Flaming Lips and full of wonderfully surprising twists into jazz, acid-rock, and hard punk. But they have to do something about the vocals.

DUST DEVILS
Gutter Light, LP
Rouska

Enterprising Brit band emigrates illegally to the Lower East Side to soak up atmosphere and drink in some "culchah." Alas, the day comes when they must return to Leeds, but they persist in their musical endeavors 'til their musical wish is granted, as they wake up one afternoon and discover that they have become -- Sonic Youth! The Dust Devils, like so many Brits before them, craftily assimilate an original American aberration, surely intending to couple it with peculiarly over the top English style and sell it back to us at twice the cost. This is a well crafted imitation, frustrating in that they could probably do much better if they channel their energies into being more original.

- Maria Jenis

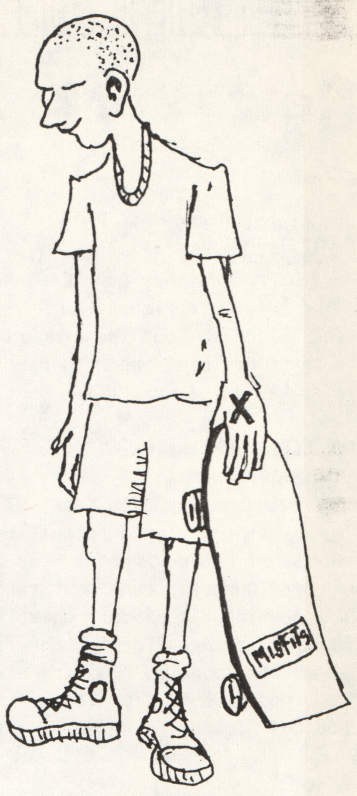
THE TEXAS INSTRUMENTS
Sun Tunnels, LP
Rabid Cat, Box 49263, Austin TX 78765

This Austin trio's whiney Dylanesque vocals push all the right buttons in this ex-folkie's fevered brain, so I'd probably like them even if they didn't write great songs, construct mesmerizing folk-/rock riffs, or record for one of the coolest indie labels around. Since they do all that & more, though, the Bob Dylan vocals are just a little icing on a very tasty cake.

RUN WESTY RUN
Hardly Not Even
SST

SST? Where was Twin\Tone when this bunch was label-shopping? This is their kind of stuff - great garage-band punk from the Twin Cities, a singer with a wickedly distinctive voice, gripping lyrics with a Dylanesque razor-edge, and a nifty sense of humor as well. Their presskit also has my favorite line of the year so far: "A stupid name is a good start." So is this record.

-J.T.



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Two new ones from the hills...Two Classic Reissues

TXLP-14
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TXLP-13 **INBRED**
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TXLP-11 **ZEROBOYS**
"Vicious Circle"
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tiny lights
some kind of wonderful

by Bruce Lee Gallanter

TINY LIGHTS
Hazel's Wreath
Gaia Records

This is just what most of us were expecting - nothing short of amazing, wisdom despite their young age. Although each member of this college-age quintet was born either during or even after the late 60's, that summer of love, joyous/innocent feeling abounds with fairy tale-like grace on this LP. Tiny Lights have distilled the best elements of that scene, now over 20 years old. While casting away some of its barriers, they've combined a number of opposites: the acoustic/electric vibrations, as well as the soft & pure vs. the darker areas of rock. There's a parallel of eclectic diversity that the Beatles and Stones used during this era, especially brought out by Tiny Lights' use of the cello, sustained-tone guitar, and Indian-drone violin. All of which are used to their best advantage. Beyond that, Tiny Lights knows just when to let it burn - that special moment of release.

Everything about this band is growing stronger, maturing like fine wine. They remain extremely ambitious, challenging themselves with unique song structures and varied musical genres. A fine example of this is the ever-surprising and brilliant "The Bridge," which balances two distinct sections into an amazing whole. Here, Donna Croughn, who is usually the center of innocence with her breathtakingly sweet voice, takes on a new challenge. While the band pulls off a slow cool blues groove, Donna's voice is utterly sensuous. The song shifts gears a number of times, launching into a smoking blues-rock stomp. Cellist Jane Scarpantoni and guitarist John Hamilton execute a marvelous double solo, each pushing the other to further heights.

Tiny Lights continually expands upon their worldly influences. They do a neat Fairport-like folk/rock hoedown called "Wickerman's Dog." There is an appropriately goofy edge to part of this instrumental treat, which is a nice change. They go even further on "Green Instead," which consists mostly of a delicate, melancholy melody and lovely vocal by John, yet which ends with an Indian raga-like episode.

Photo by Andy Peters

Perhaps the most eclectic piece on the first side is "Colours & The Light," with its Beatles/Bonzo-like odd British dancehall sound, interwoven with a number of unexpected sections, once again pushing the boundaries outward. Great trick of mixing the layered spoken and sung vocals as one thing; John Lennon would've dug this one, no doubt.

"Grown Up Fish" reminds me of a strain of late 60's folk/pop developed by the early Airplane, Mamas & Papas, and It's A Beautiful Day. It begins gentle as a breeze, ever so pure, but slowly grows richer, and eventually ends with more Indian-like string things.

It seems so rare to rock with just acoustic guitars, but Tiny Lights pulls it off so easily on "The Capricious Yearnings of King Edwaed." What holds this together so nicely is the strong cello playing by Jane, which provides most of that warm melody. "Before You Go" is all acoustic, and it is fueled by tabla-only percussion throughout. Truly, a rare treat, and nice groove once again.

The culmination of their more psychedelic side comes together amazingly on the last piece, "Red Planet." A grand production job on this one, which they did themselves. Unusual backwards vocals and layered guitars in a strange haze, plus distant wah wah punctuation. Brilliant use of doubled sped-up/slowed down vocals on the chorus. Totally fucking superb! And they are often even better live. Join in & groove on out.

Goo Goo Dolls

by Jim Testa

The Goo Goo Dolls are a 3-piece riot squad from Buffalo who suprised a lot of people with their great debut LP on Mercenary, a label ususally reserved for hardcore speedmetal outfits with machinegun drummers and laser-bearing hi-tech axemen. Like those other Dolls of yore, the Goo Goo's sound is a mix of punk rock, metal licks, and 70's grunge, all slapped together without a great deal of care or craftsmanship in the same Upstate garage that gave birth to the Chesterfield Kings and the Splatcats. What the Goo Goo Dolls are not is a hardcore band. That's just what everybody thinks they are.

The lineup is Johnny on guitar, George on drums, and Robbie on vocals and bass, and it was Robbie we got a chance to talk to.

Q: So how's everything going? Where are you guys from, exactly?

Robbie: We're from the Buffalo area, in a part of the city that's really just, like, collegetown, y'know? There's not a lot happening up here, just us, the Splatcats, and this young band, the Ramrods. I'm just so happy whenever there's a show or something going on. We had this big tour lined up, we were all set, we were going to hit New York and go as far west as Milwaukee... It kinda got derailed when Johnnie...well, he almost got hit by a car crossing the street, and when he jumped out of the way, he hurt his hand and couldn't play. So the whole tour went down the drain. So now we're just getting ready to do the second record. I don't think there's much more we can do with the first now, it's over 6 months old. We have a whole other record written already, it's just a matter of going into the studio and doing it.

Q: The first record sounds like the songs might have been written over a pretty long period of time. Some of the songs are really simple and others are really good, more catchy and better arranged.

Robbie: Well, what happened was, about a month and a half after we got together, we got a 5-song demo together, and it had, like, "I'm Addicted," "Heartsores," "Sunshine Of Your Love" on it. We just did that to get some interest up locally, give it away to radio, get some shows and stuff. And when Mercenary heard it, they liked those mixes so much they just said, yeah, just throw them on the album and do some more....we finally wound up with four different sessions, four different engineers, which is why the songs sound so different. I kind of like the way it came out. Some of the reviews, like in CMJ, they said that the inconsistencies are what made the record interesting... I think it makes it more of a basement-type record, which is really what we are. One of our biggest fears was going into the studio and coming out with something like a Poison record.

Q: The record sounds really good for a first try that was produced by the band.

Robbie: Well, all of us in the band have worked in that studio, I'm an engineer there. So I basically knew what all the equipment did, and the other guys knew what they wanted it to sound like, so it went really fast. I think we recorded the whole thing in like four or five days.

There are lots of guitars on the record. And sometimes there are two drum tracks, for a really big drum sound, and sometimes two basses. We're not the best musicians in the world...we just write better songs than most of those guys out there. There are some bands that are great musicians but don't have any originality. We're incredibly creative, we just can't play our instruments to save our life.

Q:Which tracks do you think sound most like what the band is like on stage?

"Torn Apart," maybe. We're very messy live. We scream a lot. And we've got the sloppiest guitar solos ever. We're really yell-y. What we're not is a speedmetal band, yet we've kinda been trapped by that first record, set in a certain genre, plopped into the middle of the hardcore scene. A lot of that is the label, you know...And now Mercenary Records presents, Primal Scream and The Goo Goo Dolls!

Q: I hear the first time you came to NYC, CBGB made you play a hardcore matinee.

Robbie: Yeah, that was awful. We just freaked out and tried to be a hardcore band, and we're not, so it wasn't very good. The kids seemed to like us, I mean people slammed to us. But it was a warm day and there were about 500 kids outside and about 10 inside to watch us play, and it just didn't work. It was like Husker Du going in there and trying to be Slayer.

Q: What kind of crowd do you play to at home?

Robbie: I don't even know. We're so confused about who likes us. We get along pretty well with the hardcore crowd up there. But the last time we did a show, there were like 40-year old men with mustaches watching us. With mustaches! And preppie college kids, and metalheads, and Deadheads, and hippies, and punks... We wind up playing to all kinds of people... One of the funny things is that we got some pretty good reviews in the metal magazines. That really blew all our minds, we never expected them to like the record. Strange.

Goo Goo Dolls

Q: How did the band get together?

We all knew each other in Buffalo, although we all came from really different backgrounds. The guitarist was in like this bad Sex Pistols post-punk type hardcore band, the drummer was in this psychedelic farout beat-type group, and I had been in all these really bad metal bands, which is something I really wanted to get away from. We got together in May, 1986. And you know, that record was done in early October, '86. We rushed to get it finished, and then it was delays, delays, delays. Nobody actually heard it until April of '87.

Q: What kind of equipment do you guys use?

Robbie: We've got some really cheap cheesey equipment. We throw it around on stage so much that you don't want to have anything really good out there. Johnnie has this Robin guitar. He didn't used to use any effects at all, but now he uses a tube driver. I have an Electra bass and a Cerwin-Vega amp. Our drummer has two different sets, but one's a real nice vintage Gretch.

Q: What will the next record be like?

Robbie: I hope it will have, I hate to use this word, but a little more melody. I think that will open up another door for us... We like the way the first record came out to the point where we'll probably be using four different engineers again this time, to get different sounds. After all, that's me singing all those songs, and there are only three of us, so we have to do something to change it up. But it'll still probably be a pretty messy record. I mean, as far as human beings go, we don't take all that much care with our lives. So why should we spend all that time being careful in a studio?

MISSION OF BURMA
"Mission of Burma EP,"
Taang

Mission Of Burma may not have actually been the Velvet Underground of the 80's, but they did create an utterly unique, immediately recognizable oeuvre that was quickly copied by an impressive number of American underground musicians, and eventually disseminated widely enough to constitute a genre all its own - one of the major post-punk escape clauses.

The Burmas were art-rockers who fell in love with hardcore's raw energy and familiarity with cacophony, and still would not write off hummable melodies in the bargain. While their composing wasn't always consistent quality-wise, especially guitarist Roger Miller's, it was always self-demanding conceptually. And often enough, usually when bassist Clint Conley was responsible for the songsmithing, there were indeed gorgeous tunes. The 5 songs here stem from their legendary Vs. pre-album plus outtakes from their one studio LP, I believe. I'm not exactly straight on all this history. "Forget" is possibly my favorite Burma ever after "Einstein Today." "Peking Spring" is another gem. Fug, they all are. MOB's music opened a number of stylistic doors and introduced a crucial new vocabulary to rock n roll. Roger Miller's cacophonous rhythm guitar and feedback extremisms - isolated and exaggerated via tape by Martin Swope - were anchored by Conley's modal bass playing. To provide as thick a harmonic foundation as possible, Conley used an unprecendented amount of bass chords and often plucked two strings simultaneously, one for his melody line and one for a drone. It was a style that proved vastly influential; Husker Du's Greg Norton picked up on it immediately, significantly accelerating the Huskers' evolution out of the hyper-speed spazz-core heterodoxy. From there it spread throughout the post-punk underground, taking hold most truthfully in the midwest as well as MOB's native Boston. Blah blah blah. If ya don't need this record, you don't wanna know where heartfelt, hot-headed rock has been or is aiming for. Just flip on "Club MTV" and tune out.

- Howard Wuelfing

BURMA

PAGAN BABIES

by Tony Rettman

This interview was done on January 22 when the Pagan Babies played City Gardens in Trenton, NJ. Which must have been an experience since The Exploited, who were headlining, left their gleaming drumset plus all their equipment on stage throughout the opening bands' sets. Plus when The Exploited finally took the stage, a crowd of pro-American skinheads wanted to tear them apart; some skins stormed the stage and started to beat the shit out of Wattie! I must say it was an interesting show. Of course, this is an interview, not a show review, but some of this comes up later...

T = Tony Rettman
P = Pagan Babies Eric and Dan
J = Jim Testa
M = Pagan Baby Mark Pingitore

T: Fill the readers of this magazine in on the statistics of the Pagan Babies.

P: We have the same lineup we started off with back in October, '86, with Mark Pingitore on bass, Eric Squadroni on lead guitar, Dan McGinnis on rhythm guitar, Bruce Boyd on drums, and Mike sings.

T: When's the album coming out?

P: Probably before the year 2000. We're trying to set a date for the year 2000, seeing our record company is a bit slow. Positive Force's phone has been dead, so it's hard to contact them.

[A week after the City Gardens show Pagan Babies played CBGB in New York, and J.T. got a chance to talk to bassist Mark Pingitore]

J: So, has Positive Force reconnected their phone yet?

M: Nah, fuck 'em, man. We've just had it with trying to deal with them. It's all so disorganized.

J: Is Positive Force just basically Kevin Seconds, or is there really people working at the label?

M: Nah, it's just him and his girlfriend. She was supposed to be taking care of stuff while he and 7 Seconds were on tour, and then she went to travel with them for a while, so nothing got done. We finally gave up and we're gonna do the album on my label [Plus Records] and release it ourselves. At least we'll know what's going on and where the records are.

[Back to City Gardens...]

T: What did you think of the stuff that went down tonight?

P: Take the Bolsheviks, they come into the ring, they're tailing Strike Force & you know the guys from the USA are gonna cheer on Strike Force, you know what I mean? Personally, I didn't enjoy it to any extent, seeing bands get picked on, but that's the way it goes. I think that when you get people that dress funny with funny haircuts [he probably means The Exploited here, not The Uprise - Editor's Note], it usually starts trouble. I don't care how big a band is in the underground, but the basis of the scene is to support each other, as far as I can recall, but when a band comes in & tries to separate itself from the scene, then they're not a part of the scene. And if you're gonna do that, ya better know how to take it.

T: What do you think of people who say, "The Pagan Babies, that straight edge band!" Do a lot of people say that?

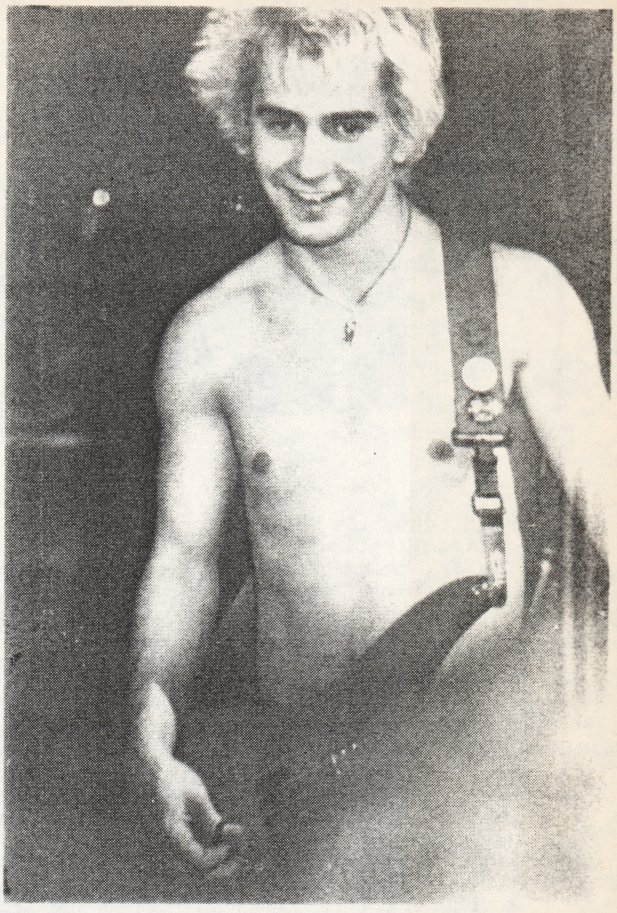
P: Definitely. It's not that we're alcoholics or anything, but if we were a S.E. band, nobody would know it, because we're not into labels. I'm not straight-edge, but I don't drink right now because I was getting obsessed with drinking. I just put it aside. That's not straight edge, that's common sense. I appreciate that question.

T: What are some of your favorite rap groups?

PB: I like a lot of rap, like Criminal Minded, KRS-1, Scott La Rock (who's dead), Public Enemy, Ice T, Schooly-D. From my sources in NY, that bullet that Scott LaRock got was supposed to be for LL Cool J, but that's from an unreliable source.

T: What are you listening to lately?

P: Everything from jazz, reggae, blues, 60's rock, everything but Top 40. We're musical flowers of the earth. I think the Damned are the greatest band to walk the earth, because they're always striving to be different & they haven't sold out yet or anything. They're still underground.

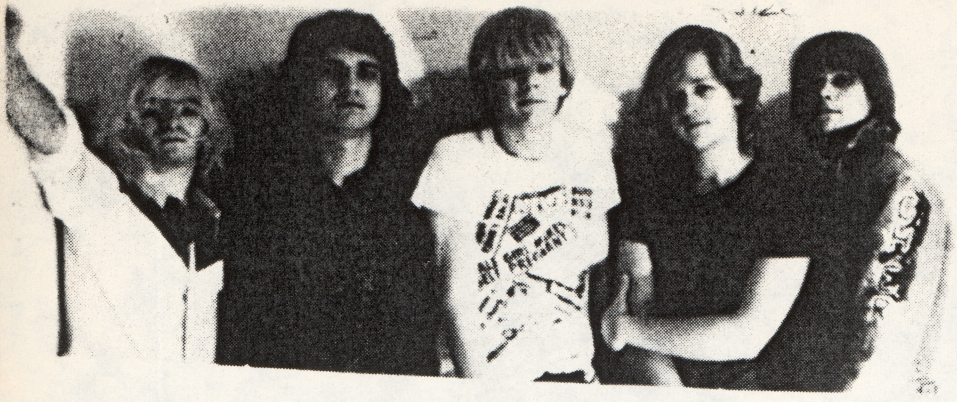


MARK PINGITORE
Teen Idol Bass

T: Anything to say to the readers of Jersey Beat?

P: Jersey Beat is a fine magazine that's filled with information that send shivers down the spine and tantalizes the mind. I'd like to say hello to NJ, Pennsylvania. We are the PAGAN BABIES, we'll be in your town soon playing our melody & we'll enjoy whatever anybody offers...steel cage matches, we're into it. Also, hellos to Token Entry, TCO, Side By Side, and The Uprise.

BRUCE BOYD
Grafitti Artist Drummer



SPLATCATS
Feelin' Bitchy, LP
Moving Target/Celluloid

The Splatcats first full-length LP finally gives this unkempt Buffalonian garage band the chance to stretch a little and show what they can do beyond the confines of a $1.98 budget and a recording session measured not in hours, but minutes. And lo & behold, the drums don't sound like shoeboxes anymore, the guitars boom and blare a little more distinctively, and Shaggy Faust actually manages to sing in tune (a bit). But don't worry, this isn't any major-indie-label sellout. It doesn't take anymore than five seconds of the title tune to convince even the most jaded listener that the Splatcats are still the noisiest, messiest rock 'n roll reprobates this side of Jerry Lee Lewis.

The Splatcats
feelin' bitchy

A phonecall from lead singer Shaggy Faust revealed that for the first time, sombody besides me is listening to these guys. Feelin' Bitchy was charting at 24 in Rockpool and 36 in CMJ even before the first wave of fanzine reviews started to hit the stands. "We're really in a state of shock," said Shaggy, "something is actually happening as good as we hoped it would for a change."

Among several changes in the band, Rich Ditch is now playing bass, and former bassist Frank "The Crank" Spector is the new lead guitarist. Both had played in Upstate New York's Stitches. Other Splatcat news includes the band's European tour - Germany, Amsterdam, London, and Paris - a first for the group, which has spent too much of its time landlocked in Buffalo. Original members Skeeter (drums) and Johnny Lightning (keyboards and guitar) are still around 'n kicking.

Feelin' Bitchy kicks off in high gear with "Even Steven," a compendium of rock 'n roll cliches (invoking - with their usual kitchen sink abandon - everything from Suzi Quatro to "Papa Oom Mow Mow") set to a typically infectious Splatcat melody. A quick tour of side one includes "Claim To Fame," in which - if I'm hearing things right (and these guys can be more obtuse than R.E.M.) - they claim they haven't got one, the balladish "She's Killing Time" (slow dance, ladies choice), and the anthemic "Feelin' Bitchy," as chaotic and resplendently noisy as it gets. As always, this 60's garage band throttles the beat and invokes any number of Flower Power icons, all the while managing to sound like everything but a 60's garage band.

One innovation on this LP are the vocals, which appear to be in the same key as the rest of the band for a change. "It's amazing, but yeah, I actually sing in key," admits Shaggy. "I just turned down the volume in the headphones and it helped me sing on pitch. Before, I always had the music in the headphones so loud that I couldn't hear myself."

The 24-track production also provides for a much meatier drum sound and denser guitar tracks; a long way from a polished production, but a lot cleaner and more professional than the Splats' classically grotey debut, "5 Big Ones."

Side Two explores more familiar themes - teensploitation ("Eat My Dust"), teenage angst ("Until December"), and Satan ("Evil Grows"). You can really sum the Splatcats up with their lead singer's name. Shaggy, as in unkempt, unruly, ill-mannered, and wild; and Faust, as in, they sold their souls to dat ole debbil rock 'n roll.
- Jim Testa

Hey. Do you prefer death to life, war to peace and torture to fun? Are you into speed, thrash, power and DEATH metal? Then read my fuckin' magazine! I'd like you to check out Metal Meltdown if you are into the heaviest. Dicks and loosers need not write! Our third issue is out and features Death, Hallows Eve, Trouble and MORE! It is a whopping 48 pages long, you can't beat it. All kinds of other shit too:letters, reviews, guitar notes,and my favorite,a crossword puzzle! Besides, let's face it, I need the fuckin' money.I just hit this guy with my car and I've got repair bills up the ass. Rent is due, I can't afford to buy my Dad a birthday present! Support the sick. For issue, send $1.25 or subscribe for $14/12 issues.Funds payable to: Jeff VanderClute, P.O. Box 824, Severna Park Md., 21146. Support definately rules!

Sh, and Fury! Speed, Thrash, and Fury!

Talk about your cutting edges... Carbonic Smog are a young hc band less than a year old, and still a few months away from releasing their first demo. But they're such a refreshing change from the straight-edge choirboy weenies who dominate the NY/HC scene that we thought we'd present this slightly premature interview. The Smog are Chris Yaniak, 16, vocals and guitar ("likes to drink and get laid"); Bill Barbato, 15, bass and vocals ("likes to work with equipment"); and Jay Ingstrup, 15, drums ("likes to hang out"). Chris Yaniak is speaking. Read what he has to say, and remember: It's 10 p.m. Do you know where YOUR kid brother is?

"Carbonic Smog started in late '86 by me and Bill. We just wanted to jam and get violent. The only things we have in common is drinking, music, sex, and violence. The Carbonic Smog that is now has been together for 3 or 4 months (although another guitarist, Craig Copolla, quit in April). The best show we've played was last November at a school show. There were about 150 people. As soon as we started, about 50 people got on the stage and slammed. We got kicked off in 17 seconds. That show was our favorite and we call it The 17 Second Show.

You describe your sound as "Punk Oi." Why?

Punk-Oi! music to me means attitude. It means violence and I hate you. We think our music is cool because it's violent, real original, and strange. Come see us live and you'll see.

I'm a skinhead but I'm letting it grow and I'm gonna get a hawk. I hardly know what politics is. Socially, our whole band are outcasts in our towns. We all think straight-edge is queer. Drinking is great and it's almost as good as getting laid. Anyone who don't fuck or drink is a queer.

Some of our favorite influences are Skewdriver, 4Skins, Sex Pistols, Exploited, and Oi!Polloi. The band that influenced me to be in a band was probably the Pistols. I think the same with Bill. We would rather have bands open up for us but [if we could open for any band in the world] it would probably be Skrewdriver.

Does being a skinhead punk cause problems fitting into society?

In our town, we are outcasts. Most of the people are jocks or they are metalers. If people are assholes we ignore them, but if they are cool or if it's a woman, we talk to them. We believe in ourselves and people should believe in themselves instead of some god.

We hope to be playing around this summer and our demo should be out in July or something. It's gonna be hell. Thanks to everyone who helped us and supported Smog. Write to us at:

Chaotic Clan
%Bill Barbato
119 S. Broadway
S.Amboy NJ 08879

BRAND NEW STUFF!

ADRENALIN O.D.
Cruising With Elvis In Bigfoot's UFO
Buy Our Records

"What's the use of struggling?/we're selling out to the next big thing," sing NJ's gift to hardcore punk, A.O.D. But their bid for superstardom may be a bit premature. Is the world really ready for songs about creative barfing ("Bulimic Food Fight"), midget Westerns, Amy Carter, and the Flipside classifieds? Probably not...and it's their loss, because this is Adrenalin O.D.'s finest moment. A new studio and new producer have finally ended the years of soggy sound and mushy mixes; the drums sound like drums now, not wet paper bags. The guitars sound like guitars (god, they sound like fuckin' Kiss at full volume back in 1975!), not like a Black & Decker with a bad piston. And the songs rock; wonderfully catchy stuff, charged with instantly memorable riffs. Diehard thrash addicts are gonna complain that A.O.D. have slowed down, but to you & me that only means they've gone from Very Very Fast to Very Fast. This is still a killer LP, great songs, funny as shit, super crisp production... This is Adrenalin O.D.'s best album since Humongus Fungus Amongus. And you can quote me on that.

- Jim T.

THE VINES
"Walk The Floor" 6-song EP
Aquablue Records, 165 Third St., #6, Hoboken, NJ 07030

The Vines long-delayed debut EP brings back a lot of memories from the heyday of the Hoboken pop scene - the brightly chorded guitars of the early Bongos, the tight, energetic songwriting of the Individuals, and the breathy, sexy vocals of the Cyclones. Most of this comes as no surprise; ex-Individual Jon Klages did the production at Mitch Easter's Drive-In Studio, and ex-Cyclone Marc Seligman played bass. The "Easter" sound hasn't been utilized this well on a record in a while, and the shimmery guitar sound especially will remind you of Let's Active's best moments. I hate to keep using words like catchy and quirky when talking about Hoboken pop bands. But they fit.

- Jim T.

MEAT PUPPETS
Huevos, LP
SST

I liked last year's Byrds-ish Mirage, but the Meat Puppets are going to have to do better than this lukewarm offering to satisfy those disgruntled fans who feel senility is starting to creep in on this band. This year's model is a little more frenetic than last year's, but the hotter licks sound generic on Huevos. I liked a couple of these tracks, like "Paradise" and "Look At The Rain," but this is not a disc I'm going to be reaching for ten years from now. The Village Voice not too long ago took a swipe at the Puppets, comparing them none too respectfully to the Grateful Dead. And the last track here, "I Can't Be Counted On," did kind of remind me of the kings of mellow hippie rock. Personally, I'd rather be reminded of the Byrds or the Flying Burrito Brothers.

- Mark Fogarty

Jack Rabid on reviewing records:
"...Fred Mills...observed that 'I dig most of what I hear,' but the truth is, I only write about what I'm interested in...and more often than not, I'm interested in what I like. Actually, I hate 85% of what I hear, and almost 90% of what I get for free, so I just don't cover them."

- The Big Takeover #23

Lyle Hysen, from "The Das Damen Tour Diaries:"
"...7/2 Omaha, Nebraska...An award-winning gig as I was asked forty times if we play fast and/or skate, an all-time record. Also, special award to the suicidal promoter, who couldn't flyer because his girlfriend left him. We played, just to make sure the dude didn't blow his brains out."

-Flesh & Bones #7

Tommy Stinson of the Replacements on Bill Callahan, former editor of the Replacements fanzine, Willpower, and now Disaster:
"...He is the strangest guy you will ever meet. Every time we ever see him, he'll walk in the room and just say two words. He won't talk to you at all. After being in the dressing room for just two minutes, the fucker got a novel full of shit on us...Most of it he makes up... I don't know if he is really bright or just a creep."

- Ink Disease #13

Sonic Youth's Kim Gordon on why the band didn't use drumsticks to twist their guitar strings during a show in Texas:
"...That's because we don't want to make every song a drumstick song. It gets boring."

- Cosloy Youth #1

Rob Daly of The Uprise, on his band's reputation for starting fights:
"...We'll never start a fight at a show, because we want shows to keep going on. If people start trouble with us, well, then..."

- Threatening Society #5

Fanzines

Bob Bert on his days in Drunk Driving, with the infamous Peter Missing:
"...It was getting really embarassing and stupid. They would refuse to use a set list so everybody was playing something different and at live shows the band would throw a lot of shit around and it would get totally out of hand. I was getting smacked in the head by hardcover books and stuff. I guess for the time we were kind of wild and unique. We were like the local Flipper and it was cool at the time because Hoboken was full of pop fans. I'm not really proud of the band but I guess that we accomplished something."

- Flesh & Bones #7

Tim Sommer on the 70's revival:
"...We're searching for a simplicity, a life without yuppies and condos, a world before we discovered Art and David Byrne, an anti-urban vast America that glorifies anti-urban lumpeness and ignores and denies the destructive, fractured tribal quality of 80's post-punk. We panic because we don't think we can find anything new, especially in so-called 'new music;' so we try to wish ourselves into a time before there was anything new at all."

- The Big Takeover #23

The Big Takeover
% Jack Rabid, 249 Eldridge St. #14 New York, NY 10002 $1

After 6 years of his xeroxed newslettering, Jack goes big-time, with 32 pages offset on newsprint...same size as our zine, actually, but it seems so much bigger. Partly because **Takeover** is all reduced text and just a few photos - no graphics, no headlines, no white space - and partly because it's bursting at the seams with Jack's indefatigable exploration of "music with heart." Too much for any one human to read, let alone write. Not just recommended; essential.

URBAN RAG
% Jon Ment, 732 E. 22 St., Brooklyn, NY 11210 Free w/SASE

Up 'n coming small format xeroxed zine focusing on NYC's art-rock/punk/noise scene, plus record reviews. Jon always manages to interview a band I really hate (in this issue, The Plague)... Also, Hugo Largo, Of A Mesh, record & tape reviews.

YIPES
% Ken Cousino, PO Box 173, Temperance, MI 48182 $1

Ken celebrates his 19th birthday with a humongous John Stabb interview, then Stabb gets to interview Toledo scenester Jon Stain. Also, MDC, Die Kreuzen, Killdozer, tons more, not much graphics, just lots of stuff to read, xeroxed.

THREATENING SOCIETY #6 $1.50
% Tony Mattei, 1425 S. Broad St. Philadelphia, PA 19147

The Ian MacKaye interview alone makes this my fanzine pick of the month, full of Ian reflecting on his place in hardcore and the way his message of straightedge has been interpreted by today's punks. Plus there are intvws with Pagan Babies and Agnostic Front, reviews, photos.

FOSTER CHILD #1 $1.50
7635 March Ct, Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Despite the Maryland address, lots of staffers on this zine came from hereabouts. Features tend to focus on garage and rootsabilly talents, plus more eclectic record reviews and some photos.

HARDCORE 4 NJ #4 ($.45 SASE)
% Spike Haldopoulos, 6 Heather Hill Way, Mendham, NJ 07945

Nicely put together hardcore zine with G.I., A.O.D., Bedlam, Hogans Heroes, and lots of reviews. I always like to see a new HC4NJ show up.

THIS ZINE SUCKS #11 $1.00
% Bob Conrad, 1601 Scenic Dr., W. Trenton NJ 08628

More quintessential hc happenings from Bob Conrad & Co., this time with Ludichrist and Henry Rollins on tap for interviews. Very cool cover. 2nd anniversary issue!

CHROME ON FIRE
39 Bartlett St., New Brunswick, NJ 08901 $1 (?)

Brunfuss scenester David Aaron Clark gives the Hub City its own fanzine, although #1 offers a pretty varied menu: (another) Sonic Youth interview, Catharsis, prose/poetry by Kevin Hayes, an interview with gameshow emcee Bill Cullen, some literary weirdness, and reviews. Nice looking layout (done on a Mac, the ultimate Desktop Publishing computer). Hope he keeps it up.